

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PINR, IT,EFING
SUBJECT: THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN ITALY'S CHRISTIAN-ORIENTED
LABOR CONFEDERATION CISL

REF: ROME 8564

1. SUMMARY. IN ITS QUADRENNIAL CONGRESS MAY 26-28, CISL'S
LARGEST AFFILIATED THE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' UNION FISBA,
REELECTED ITS SECRETARY GENERAL PASEL SARORI AND LINED UP
SOLIDLY WITH THE CISL MODERATES LED BY FRANCO MARINI. THE
CONGRESS REASSERTED FISBA'S TRADITIONAL POSTIONS: IDENTI-
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FICATION WITH WESTERN DEMOCRACY AND CISL AUTONOMY, AND
OPPOSITION TO UNION UNIFICATION SUBORDINATE TO POLITICAL
PARTIES, PARTICULARLY TO THE COMMUNIST PARY (PCI). ACTING
CISL SECGEN LUIGI MACARIO, REPRESENTING CISL'S PRESNET LEFT-
CENTER MAJORITY, ENLIVENED THE CONGRESS WITH A PROVOCATIVE
TALK, AND THE DELEGATES RESPONDED WITH ANIMATED INDIGANTION,
MARINI'S SPEECH WAS WARMLY RECEIVED, AS WERE REMARKS BY FORMER

CISL PRESS CHIEF LUCA BORGOMEIO, FRESH FROM HIS VICTORY AT THE HEAD OF THE PRO-MARINI SLATE AT THE ROME PROVINCIAL CISL CONGRESS. THESE TWO CONGRESSES GAVE THE MARINI GROUP ON IMPORTANT, BOOST GOING INTO THE JUNE 14-18 CISL CONGRESS, BUT THE COALITION OF MACARIO AND PIERRE CARNITI STILL SEEMS LIKELY TO HAVE A NARROW LEAD IN DELEGATES. END SUMMARY.

2. QUADRENNIAL CONGRESSES OF NATIONAL CATEGORY UNIONS AND REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE THREE NATIONAL LABOR CONFEDERATIONS ARE BEING HELD THICK AND FAST THROUGHOUT ITALY AS THE CONGRESSES OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS APPROACH. THE SITUATION IS MOST DRAMATIC IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-ORIENTED CISL. THE MODERATE MINORITY LED BY MARINI, SARTORI, ANGELO FANTONI AND BORGOMEIO IS CHALLENGING THE LEFT-CENTER MAJORITY LED BY MACARIO AND CARNITI (REFTEL AND PREVIOUS). CISL'S TWO LARGEST CATEGORY UNIONS (FISBA AND FIM, THE METALWORKER'S UNION) AND SECOND LARGEST PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION (ROME) HELD CONGRESSES THE WEEK OF MAY 22-28. AS EXPECTED, FIM LINED UP SOLIDLY BEHIND FORMER FIM LEADERS MACARIO AND CARNITI AND FISBA BEHIND MARINI ET AL. IN ROME, BORGOMEIO (A PROTEGED FORMER CISL SEC GEN BRUNO STORI) WHO LEFT THE STORTI-CREATED MAJORITY TO JOIN THE MARINI GROUP, AFTER STORTI RETIRED LAST DECEMBER) GARNERED AN IMPRESSIVE TRIUMPH, WINNING WHAT HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO BE A FAIRLY TIGHT RACE BY AN 8 TO 5 MAJORITY AND OUSTING THE FORMER PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP.

3. SARTORI OPENED THE FISBA CONGRESS WITH A RELATIVELY MILD AND CONCILIATORY REPORT, EMPHASIZING FISBA'S STRONG TRADITIONAL OFFICIAL USE

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TIONAL DEFENSE OF WESTERN DEMOCRACY, PLURALISM AND CISL'S AUTONOMOUS IDENTITY. HE CALLED FOR A STRONG, UNITED, DID AUTONOMOUS CISL, NOT SUBORDINATE TO POLITICAL PARTIES AND THUS NOT COMPELLED TO LIMIT ITS FREEDOM OF ACTION BY COMMITTING ITSELF TO THE POLITICAL COMPROMISE (BETWEEN COMMUNISTS AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS) WHICH HE SAID ALREADY EXISTS IN ITALY. FISBE, HE NOTED, HAD WORKED TO STOP BOTH DISSOLUTION OF CISL (ID. UNIFICATION OF THE 3 CONFEDERATIONS) AND ITS SCISSION. ALTHOUGH CRITICAL OF THE CISL LEFT FOR ALLOWING ITSELF TO BE USED AS AN INSTRUMENT PUSHING FOR A GOVERNMENT INCORPORATING THE LEFT, HE WAS MORE CRITICAL OF THE SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS IN THE OTHER CONFEDERATIONS IN THIS REGARD, AND SEEMED TO LEAVE AN OPENING TO THOSE IN THE CISL LEFT WHO ALSO OPPOSE EVOLUTION TOWARD THE "HISTORIC COMPROMISE".

4. SARTORI SPOKE OUT FOR TRADE UNION MODERATION TO HELP ITALY OUT OF ITS PRESENT ECONOMIC CRISIS, REPEATING HIS PROPOSAL FOR A TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF COMPANY-LEVEL CONTRACT RENEWALS (WHICH WOULD AFFECT NORTHERN INDUSTRIAL UNIONS,

NOT HIS OWN), BUT SUGGESTING, IN THE LONG RUN, MODIFICATION OR ELIMINATION OF AUTOMATIC SALARY MECHANISM (E.G. THE COST-OF-LIVING ESCALATOR) IN FAVOR OF NEGOTIATED INCREASES WHICH ENHANCE THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS AND PRESERVE PLURALISTIC DECENTRALIZATION. HE EMPHASIZED ITALY'S COMMITMENT TO EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, BUT SAID THAT ENLARGEMENT OF THE EEC TO INCLUDE OTHER MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE TO BE BE CONDITIONAL ON A MORE EQUITABLE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY-- NEEDED IN ANY EVENT. HE URGED FISBA FORWARD IN SHIFTING EMPHASIS FROM ITS RELIEF AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE ROLE TO BECOME A LEANER, MORE-EFFECTIVE TRADE UNION. HE REFERRED DEFENSIVELY TO THE LEGAL FREEZE AGAINST REMOVING NO-LONGER-ACTIVE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS THE COMBINED ROLLS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY, OTHER PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, AND UNION MEMBERSHIP, HE ADVOCATED ELIMINATION OF THIS FREEZE, BUT ONLY AFTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE PROVIDED IN THE SOUTH. (THIS WAS THE MAJOR BREAD-AND-BUTTER ISSUE, REFERRED TO REPEATEDLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BY DELEGATES IN THE SAME TERMS.)

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5. AFTER SOME UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHETHER HE WOULD COME, ACTING Cisl SecGen Macario appeared and made a rather provocative speech. (Macario is seeking to a full term on a center-left platform together with Pierre Carniti, outstanding spokesman of the Cisl who is the left, candidate for deputy against Marini SecGen "What is important is not to have 400,000 nominal members, but to have at least 250,000 ready to go into the piazzas with the Cisl banner," said Macario, questioning Fisba's membership figures, militance and loyalty to Cisl all at once and drawing numerous outbursts from the delegates. Macario
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argued in favor of Cisl's participation, and efforts on behalf of labor unity, in the CGIL-Cisl-UIL Federation (CCU), and criticized Fisba for its isolation, particularly for not even inviting representatives of other Cisl unions and CGIL and UIL agricultural workers' unions. A Fisba official interrupted that the CGIL and UIL agricultural unions had been invited. (Indeed, a Federbraccianti-CGIL spokesman appeared next afternoon, saying they had received the invitation hours earlier, made some broad, bland remarks and of the remarks of the several dozens of delegates who also left.) Macario subsequently became the negative focus outbid Sartori in their outspoken defense of pluralism, democracy and the west and criticism of socialists, communists, the Cisl left, the north and even northern industrial workers' wage demands and northern union leaders.

6. THE OTHER HIGH POINTS OF THE CONGRESS WERE CONCILIATORY address by Franco Marini, who was warmly and enthusiastically received, remarks by New Rome provincial Cisl secretary Borgomeo, enthusiastically cheered after his victory over the center-left, Sartori's hard-hitting speech summing up the congress, and the elections of officers and delegates. In contrast with his opening address, Sartori's closing remarks were notable more aggressive against Macario and the Cisl left, in defense of democracy and the west, and in attacking the communists and socialists. He was interrupted frequently by rousing applause. In elections for the general council, Sartori received votes representing 99.5 percent of the eligible membership, leading the

LIST BY A GOOD MARGIN. THE COUNCIL PROMPTLY REELECTED
HIM SECRETARY GENERAL UNANIMOUSLY, EXCEPT FOR ONE BLANK BALLOT.
AFTER SEVERAL EMBRACES, SARTORI, WAS LIFTED UNTO THE SHOULDERS
OF HIS SUPPORTERS AND CARRIED ABOUT, ARMS ALOFT IN A
VICTORY SIGN, ACKNOWLEDGING THE CHEERS OF THE DELEGATES

SARTORI THEN PROPOSED NAMES
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FOR ELECTION AS NATIONAL SECRETARIES, AND THEY TOO WERE
ELECTED VIRTUALLY UNANIMOUSLY. AL VOTES WERE BY SECRET
BALLOT. A CONSOLIDATED SINGLE SLATE OF 77 DELEGATES TO THE
CISL CONGRESS WAS ELECTED, COMPOSED OF MARINI
SUPPORTERES.

7. COMMENT. AS EXPECTED, THE CONGRESS REELECTED SARTORI ADD
PRODUCED A SOLID SLATE OF PRO-MARINI DELEGATES. BORGOMEIO'S
ROME TRIUMPH BOOSTED MARINI'S DELEGATE COUNT AND THE SPIRITS
OF THE MARINI-SARTORI FORCES AFTER EARLIER, BUT EXPECTED
SETBACKS IN NORTH ITALY. ALTHOUGH NOT TOTALLY UNEXPECTED,
BORGOMEIO'S VICTORY AND ITS WIDE MARGIN FOCUSED PRESS ATTENTION
ON AND BUOYED THE SPIRITS OF THE FISBA CONGRESS. SARTORI'S
RELATIVELY OPEN, NON-ABRASIVE OPENING ADDRESS WAS EVIDENTLY
DESIGNED TO HELP MARINI, AND FOR NATIONAL CONSUMPTION. THE
STATEMENT ADOPTED BY THE CONGRESS WAS SIMILARLY MILD IN TONE.
THE FIGHTING MOOD OF SARTORI'S CLOSING REMARKS WAS A NECESSARY
RESPONSE TO MACARIO, SARTORI LATER CONFIDED TO THE EMBASSY
LABOR OFFICER. IT EVIDENTLY SATISFIED EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF
THE DELEGATES AND WAS MEANT FOR CONSUMPTION BY FISBA'S
RANK-AND-FILE. PRIOR TO BORGOMEIO'S VICTORY, MOST INFORMED
OBSERVERS HAD PREDICTED A 55-45 EDGE FOR THE MACARIO-CARNITI
MAJORITY GOING INTO THE CISL CONGRESS JUNE 14. THE EXTENT
OF BORGOMEIO'S VICTORY AND ITS EXPECTED REPERCUSSIONS HAVE
NOW NARROWED MANY ESTIMATES OF THE GAP TO AROUND 52-48, BUT
THE MACARIO-CARNITI PLATFORM IS STILL GENERALLY CONCEDED
TO HAVE THE EDGE. REGARDLESS OF WHICH PLATFORM FINALLY
PREVAILS, CONSENSUS SEEMS TO BE THAT MACARIO WILL BE
ELECTED SECRETARY GENERAL, BUT MAY NOT SERVE A FULL TERM.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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